

San Francisco Weekly Questions

1. Why is the EPA and Navy's assessment of the shipyard different?

Please see the attached report for EPA's findings from our independent review of Parcels B and G soil sample data. In regards to the discrepancy in the percentages, EPA's assessment of the data included looking more closely for signs of potential data quality problems in addition to signs of potential falsification. For example, EPA recommended resampling when data were missing or when different data collection methods did not produce consistent results. Please let us know if you have any specific questions about the report.

2. Does retesting samples on this scale deviate from the normal process of a cleanup like this?

Yes. It is not ~~normal-typical in a cleanup like this~~ to find widespread signs of potential falsification of data or data quality concerns ~~in a cleanup of this type~~.

3. It looks like there were warning signs that occurred before last week. What allowed the troubles to continue until now? (The "warning signs" mean an April 2014 report from Tetra Tech saying that they had submitted falsified soil samples. And the "troubles" are the ongoing issues related to the soil samples.)

In 2012, the Navy's internal quality control review of work by its contractor, Tetra Tech, ~~discovered discrepancies-anomalous results from the results they would have expected in some Hunters Point Naval Shipyard soil samples. Subsequently, Tetra Tech conducted an investigation related to one specific sign of concern, resampled the areas showing that concern, and excavated soil that showed levels of contamination above health-based cleanup goals. Tetra Tech EC Inc. summarized its actions in a report dated April 2014.~~

~~EPA—along with the State of California Department of Public Health (CDPH) and the Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC)—reviewed the sampling results in the April 2014 report carefully. Tetra Tech identified several hundred anomalous soil samples, and, as a result, conducted additional sampling and removed contaminated soils. The issue appeared resolved until new information came to light in 2016 as a result of an enforcement action taken by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission. In addition, several whistleblowers came forward in 2016 and identified new and different allegations of data falsification and failures to follow the radiation cleanup work plan and procedures. These allegations triggered a much more comprehensive review of Tetra Tech's work by the Navy, with oversight by EPA and the California Department of Toxic Substances Control. Since that time, many new and different signs of issues have emerged that show far more varied and widespread signs of potential falsification and data quality concerns. For example, in February, 2016, the Nuclear Regulatory Commission issued a Notice of Apparent Violation regarding its findings in a specific part of the site and specific former workers. In addition, in 2017 and 2018, the Navy, with oversight from EPA and state regulatory partners conducted a much broader radiological data evaluation effort.~~

EPA will continue to closely review information about any new concerns that come to light and to monitor the actions of the Navy and other agencies with regard to work by Tetra Tech EC Inc. to inform any further EPA action.

4. With retesting announced for the summer, what is the new expected timeline for the cleanup to finish?

The Navy will be resampling the impacted parcels and will rely on these new data to determine where additional cleanup may be needed. EPA's input, which is based on our independent review of the data, will help inform where the resampling will be done. The final plan for resampling is not yet complete, though the Navy has committed to resampling 100% of the survey units previously sampled by Tetra Tech EC Inc. The resampling results will determine how much additional cleanup may be needed, so at this time we are unable to predict how long that cleanup may take.